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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Wednesday, November 9, 1932

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "Planting Bulbs for Indoor Blooms." Information from the Bureau of Plant Industry, U.S.D.A.  
Menu and recipe from the Bureau of Home Economics.

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Let's get this job of meal planning off our minds first thing today, so we can talk over some indoor garden news from our friend, W.R.B., the garden adviser.

The Menu Specialist has put broiled liver first thing on the program. When that humble meat liver came suddenly into fame a few years ago-- you remember the discovery of the value of liver in preventing and treating cases of anemia--well, when liver became famous, a lot of us woke up to the fact that here was an excellent and often neglected food, especially rich in iron, which deserved a frequent place on the menu. So in many homes liver began to appear on the dinner table once or twice a week. But, unfortunately, far too few housewives mastered the art of cooking it properly. And liver needs good cooking if it is to be good. So whenever I hear anyone say, "No, I don't like liver--can't eat it. It just seems like leathery, dark slices of something without much flavor," I suspect at once that that person hasn't eaten liver cooked as it should be.

Liver can be most delicious. Before you cook it, remove the outer skin or membrane and the veins. Brown the meat delicately in plenty of good fat. Liver cooks quickly. So, for the best flavor and texture, be sure not to over cook it.

You can fix liver in a skillet. That's the old-time way. Or you can broil it right under the open flame. That's a quick way to do it. Here's exactly the way to fix broiled liver:

Have it cut in slices from 1/4" to 1/2" thick. Wipe the liver with a damp cloth. Place it on a greased baking sheet and put it under the flame of the broiling oven. Cook from 8 to 10 minutes, turning frequently. When done, sprinkle with salt and pepper, pour over it some melted butter and serve at once.

By the way, some housewives still feel that they must have calves' liver, no matter what the price. But beef liver, properly cooked, is also very good and much less expensive.

Here's the menu for today. Broiled liver; Baked sweet potatoes; Creamed turnips; and for dessert, Hot apple dumplings with sauce.

Now if you're ready, I'll give you directions for hot apple dumplings. Roll out pastry dough in rounds about the size of fruit plates. In the center of



each, set a pared and cored apple. Sprinkle the apple with a mixture of sugar, cinnamon, and a few grains of salt, and dot it with butter. Now lift up the edges of the dough and press them together. Set the dumplings in greased muffin tins and bake them in a moderate oven (350 to 375 degrees F.) for 30 minutes. Serve hot with hard sauce or with some tart liquid sauce.

But I don't want to spend all my time today talking about food, with all the other important things I have to tell you. I've been to see W.R.B., our garden adviser, to ask him about growing bulbs to bloom in the house during the winter. Do you know of anything more cheerful on a cold, windy winter's day than a pot of bright tulips or sweet hyacinths blooming on the window sill? Makes you feel just as if spring had come in spite of the weather outside. And can you think of a lovelier Christmas greeting than a bowl of sweet paper-white narcissus all in bloom or some other spring flower? W.R.B. says you can force almost any kind of bulbs in the house, if you do it properly. You can have tulips, hyacinths, narcissus or even crocuses, snowdrops or grape hyacinths. But to have success with these flowers in the house, you need plenty of patience, for the roots need time to form and they grow slowly.

The usual method of forcing tulips and hyacinths is to plant the bulbs in fern pans or shallow pots in a good, loamy soil. The paper white narcissus will grow in the house in a bowl of water if you support the bulbs with pebbles.

Be sure to keep the bulbs cool at first and allow them to grow very slowly until they form a mass of roots, says W.R.B. If you grow them in too warm an atmosphere at first, you'll get too much top growth and not enough root to support it. Then you're sure to have poor flowers or even none at all.

Bulbs potted in soil need plenty of good drainage, so put a half inch of gravel or some small pieces of broken flower pots at the bottom of each pot or fern pan. Then be sure you have at least four inches of soil for the bulbs. When you put the bulb in, first put some soil over the gravel in the bottom of the pot. Then hold the bulb in place. And fill around it with the soil. Press the earth down firmly with the fingers but leave the tip of the bulb showing above the soil. Now wet the soil with water and set the pot in the dark cool cellar. A cellar that is cool enough for storing apples will be about the right temperature for your flower bulbs. Keep watch of your pots, Be sure the soil in them doesn't get too dry.

After the potted bulbs have been down in storage five or six weeks and the pots are well filled with roots, you can bring them up into the house for forcing. Don't expose them to direct sunlight at first and keep them in a moderately cool place until they begin to make a good healthy growth and the foliage becomes green. After this you can keep them at living room temperature. But you'll find that flowers last longer if you can keep them at a temperature as low as 60 degrees.

Let's get out the calendar and count up the days until Christmas. If you start narcissus bulbs right now, in dishes of water, you ought to have some nice blooms ready by the holidays.

Tomorrow: "Questions and Answers."

